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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

19 September 1986

China-Eastern Europe: Developing Party Ties [redacted] 25X1

Summary

Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev's recent overtures to Beijing have bolstered the process of reviving Sino-East European party relations. The party leaders of Poland and East Germany will visit Beijing in the next two months. Unlike Moscow, Beijing does not see party relations with Eastern Europe as leading to reestablished party ties between China and the Soviet Union. The Chinese have been expanding economic and political relations with Eastern Europe for several years as part of their "independent foreign policy" of reducing tensions with the Soviet Bloc and expanding relations with developing countries to balance China's opening to the West. Beijing hopes to increase its influence in Moscow's backyard and to encourage both East European independence of Moscow and East-West European detente. China does not, however, want to upset Sino-US relations by giving the impression that Beijing is reassessing its ties to the West. For its part, Eastern Europe supports Moscow's move to reduce tensions within the Communist world, and hopes improved relations with China will pay economic benefits as well as lead to greater Soviet tolerance of diversity in Eastern Europe. [redacted] 25X1 25X1

This memorandum was prepared by [redacted] Office of East Asian Analysis, and [redacted] Office of European Analysis. Information available as of 19 September 1986 was used in its preparation. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to the Chief, International Security Branch, OEA [redacted] 25X1 25X1

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Statements by several Chinese and East European officials in recent months suggest that they are preparing to reestablish party relations suspended since the Sino-Soviet break of the mid-1960s.[1]

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China may reestablish party ties with Poland and East Germany during the visits to Beijing of Poland's Wojciech Jaruzelski and East Germany's Erich Honecker in late September and late October, respectively. Each is party chief as well as head of state, making the visits the highest-level contacts with China in over 20 years by the East European parties that follow Moscow's foreign policy lead.

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Beijing has stepped up its efforts to strengthen political and economic ties to Eastern Europe since Hu announced China's "independent foreign policy" at the 12th Party Congress in September 1982. We believe China seeks to:

- Encourage East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Bulgaria to emulate Romania in pursuing foreign policies less subservient to Moscow.
- Promote Beijing's long-range vision of a multipolar world in which China, Japan, and a united Europe enjoy greater autonomy from the superpowers.
- Further legitimize Chinese modernization efforts both at home and within the Communist world by sharing experiences with reform-minded Hungary.

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[1] In this analysis, Eastern Europe refers only to East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Bulgaria. China already enjoys strong party ties with Romania and Yugoslavia; Albania has ties with neither China nor the USSR.

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China, in our judgment, does not view strengthened party ties with Eastern Europe as paving the way for party relations with the Soviet Union.

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Eastern Europe, in our judgment, supports Moscow's efforts to use Sino-East European ties to improve Sino-Soviet relations in the hope that a diminution of the factionalism that has plagued the Communist world since the mid-1960s might increase Soviet tolerance of diversity within Eastern Europe. Each East European country has its own agenda with a broad range of political and economic objectives.

- Honecker has striven to raise East Germany's and his own profile in international affairs and to compete with West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, who visited Beijing in 1984 and hosted Hu in Bonn this past June.

- We believe Jaruzelski would welcome the boost to his international image that being the first East European party head (with the notable exception of Romania's Nicolae Ceaucescu, a foreign policy maverick) to visit China would bring. 25X1

We believe China will gradually normalize party relations with all of Eastern Europe, which should lead to increased senior party exchanges and attendance at one another's party congresses.

- China is scheduled to convene its next party congress in 1987, and the East Europeans will hold theirs in the early 1990s.

- Party ties will complement existing government and economic relations, which will also continue to develop at an increasing rate.

- Hungary's Janos Kadar is most likely to visit China next. Embassy sources in Budapest say the aged Kadar may be planning such a trip, but he loathes flying. Hungary would welcome the opportunity to develop relations with another reform-oriented Communist state. 25X1

Beijing will seek to reassure the West--and Washington in particular--that party relations with Eastern Europe do not foreshadow similar ties to Moscow. Deng and other senior Chinese leaders have recently stressed that any progress in Sino-Soviet relations depends on major Soviet concessions on Cambodia. 25X1

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